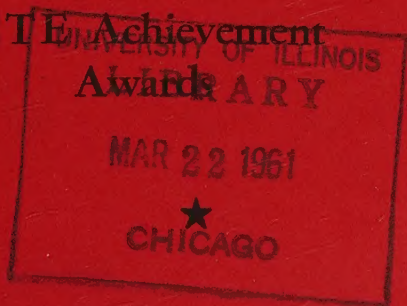


Illinois English Bulletin



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A Study of Speech in the English Classroom

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Let Any Student Speak

A Study of Speech in the English Classroom

By WILMER A. LAMAR

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Do you have students in your English classroom who refuse to stand before the class and recite? Do they sometimes fidget and squirm and slouch down and become immobile? Do they offer such a variety of excuses and explanations that you are sometimes forced to admire their imaginations? Do you involuntarily label such students "stupid," or "dumb," or, at least, "unprepared"? Does it ever occur to you that such a reticent student may be scared—scared to stand in front of a group and speak?

The truth is he may be afraid. If he is, he wouldn't be the first one, nor will he be the last. The only thing some students have to sustain them is their pride, and sometimes this fails them. If you ask students in your class how many of them like to speak before a group, it is doubtful if more than a few will raise their hands. If you ask them how many are actually afraid to speak, you may be amazed at the high percentage who so indicate. Fear of public speaking is a common disease; this fear is no respecter of age, or intelligence, or sex.

Many people, even brilliant and talented men and women, are struck dumb at having to stand to talk before a group. Many of the world's outstanding concert and dramatic artists are exceedingly nervous before a performance. If all teachers who are hesitant about speaking before PTA meetings and public forums were gathered together, they would make a huge assembly.

Yet if we see our worried student speaker in the halls, or in the cafeteria, or at a basketball game, we shall observe that he

probably will be speaking without restraint. He will get his message across to his friends; his bodily animation, his facial expression, his choice of words, the emphasis that he places will indicate that he is absorbed in what he is saying and that he is desirous that his listeners understand. This confidence, spontaneity, and naturalness on the part of the speaker must be transferred to the classroom. All repressions and restraints which thwart freedom of expression must be eliminated, or at least reduced as far as practicable.

We assume, then, that the first and primary obligation of the teacher of English teaching speech is to overcome the student's fear and to build his self-confidence. After he has accomplished this objective he may teach speech, but not before.

The procedures for speech instruction with which I am concerned are designed to overcome fear and worry in speaking, thus enabling the speaker to stand before a group and convey his thought or impression in a clear, straightforward manner. This method does not presume that the English teacher must have a degree in speech, which most do not have, or a great fund of highly technical knowledge of the mechanics of speech. For example, for our purposes, it is not necessary that an English teacher be able to draw (or require his students to draw) a picture showing all the organs that enter into the speech process. It is difficult to understand how the student's locating on a sketch the hard palate, the nasal part of the pharynx, the epiglottis closed (and open), and the focal fold will better enable him to sway an audience. Perhaps it is interesting to know that the resonating cavities are of different character in different people and that tone usually consists of a number of parts because it results from a mixture of a number of vibrations, but its importance to effective speaking does not concern us here.

If we are to help the fearful or stubborn student, our approach must be positive. It is no more necessary for a teacher to set himself up as a stern judge who notes the slightest slip and stands too willing to admonish than it is for him to become enmeshed in the technicalities of the speech process. Every success of the speaker should be noted and praised. Attention should be given to each sign of improvement, regardless of how minor. Explain to the class the method used and the reasons behind it. Emphasize that they can improve their speaking by watching for the strong points of their classmates and resolving to work these strengths into their own presentations. When suggestions for improvement of a talk are made, the better way

should be pointed out on the spot, and the student drilled on doing the thing right. When he has succeeded, ask the class if they cannot see an improvement. Let the student sit with a feeling of accomplishment, a glow of success; do not ever permit him to sit defeated, demoralized, or forlorn.

This discussion gives suggestions for enabling the teacher to help his students stand before a group and to speak effectively to reach other minds. It is not to be presumed that the class members will deliver any earth-shaking speeches or Gettysburg orations. They will speak in a direct, conversational, and comfortable manner. We shall not discuss such speech situations as conversing, telephoning, or reading aloud. Although these exercises are often profitable, there is little direct carry-over between them and platform speaking. The same adolescent who will converse easily and at great length with her friends over a coke or will monopolize the family telephone may lose all self-assurance before an audience. The gay, laughing chatter-box in class who will whisper, if allowed, to all within sound of her voice, may flatly refuse to stand before the class to speak, or if she does she will use a weak, frightened voice that is inaudible beyond the first row.

An effective talk given by your students will be a blending of reason and emotion. As Pope wrote in his "Essay on Man," "Reason is the card, but passion is the gale." Without this blending, the student's effort will be, on the one hand, as dull and insipid as that of the stereotyped college professor who takes from his brief case a set of musty notes and reads coldly and dispassionately for the lecture period; or, on the other, the gay enthusiastic elocutionist who orates beautifully about a great deal of nothing.

Procedure

1. Permit no talk of more than two minutes. Students will make most of the mistakes in two minutes that they will make in two hours. This time limit will enable the teacher to give everyone an opportunity to speak in two class periods. Do not permit anyone to exceed the limit. Permit him to finish the sentence he is on and that is all. If one talks overtime, others will insist on finishing. This two minute limit is important, not only in getting complete class participation, but in teaching organization and condensation of idea. A student will soon learn that unless he is carefully prepared, he cannot finish what he has to say. He will soon discover that it takes more preparation to organize a short talk than a long one.

2. The teacher should restrain himself and limit to one minute his own comments on the speech. If he cannot conclude his remarks, then he should have some student stop him. The temptation of the teacher is to talk longer than the student. Regardless of the message the teacher has to convey, he should remember that the single most important factor is the student speaking; attention must be focused on him.
3. Appoint a timekeeper. A stop watch is preferable, but a watch with a sweep hand is essential. A small desk bell will be most helpful. Choose a superior student as timer and coach him. If, for example, the speaker is hopelessly bogged down, he should be given the bell and not be forced to stand immobile and embarrassed for the full two minutes. There is nothing sacred about the two minute limit, but there is about the speaker.
4. For the first two or three sessions place a table in front of the room. Allow, even encourage, students to sit or at least lean on it. In the early speech sessions call them up in groups of from three to six because they take comfort in numbers. If they do have butterflies in their stomachs, and if their knees are wobbling, they will appreciate the support of the table.
5. The teacher will not remain immobile behind his desk or seated firmly and permanently in a rear seat. He will remain standing at one side of the room or in the rear where he can easily step to the front and make comments when the speaker has finished.
6. Use variety in calling up speakers. Do not say time after time, "Next speaker," "Next speaker," "Next speaker."
7. In order to conserve time (and time is of the essence), and to give students confidence, after the first few sessions, students may be called in groups of five or six. These will sit in the front row, or in chairs at the front, and will speak in the order in which they have been named. They will return to this row after the teacher's comments and move to their regular seats when a new unit is called.
8. Sometimes students are called up by three's, baseball fashion. The person speaking is "at bat"; the next one up is "on deck"; and the third is "in the hole." When one finishes, the next moves up and another name is called. The teacher may wish to have a prepared list of names to give to a student assistant who will maintain the "batting order."

9. After he has gained poise in the first session or two, keep the student on his feet until you have finished your remarks. You may want him to repeat certain phrases. You may want to drill him.

10. Some teachers have found it best to select first three or four of the best students who will set the pace and make the exercise look relatively simple. If the timid, the afraid, or the laggards are allowed to set the standard, the road ahead may be needlessly difficult.

11. The English teacher who teaches speech needs to have a number of speaking "stunts" available. These exercises add variety and interest and liven up routine speech assignments. Some of them may be used to finish out a class period when the regular speeches are concluded. Stunts should not be used, however, until the class is more experienced and all have developed a measure of self-confidence. Here are a few suggestions:

Impromptu Speech. Have each member of the class write out two subjects for impromptu speeches. When a student comes to the front, have him draw a subject and begin talking immediately.

Mock Political Campaign. Divide the class into political parties—"City-Dwellers," "Farmers," "Cowboys," "Suburbanites." Have them dress the part if you wish. Each party will work out planks in its platform. Speech opportunities are many. Each party will have a keynote speaker, and nominating and seconding speeches for governor, lieutenant governor, and treasurer.

Two Speaking at Once. After they have spoken, have them turn their backs to the class and let the class choose which has been the more enthusiastic, not which has yelled the louder. This can be an elimination contest until a class champion is chosen.

Process Talks. Have class members demonstrate a process—How to Prepare a Favorite Dish, How to Swing a Golf Club, How to Apply Make-up, How to Make Pizza, How to Paper a Room, How to Wash a Dog.

Chain Speaking. Have the students form a circle. The one designated will start a story, as dramatic and wild as he chooses. At a given signal, he will stop where he is, perhaps in the middle of a sentence. The person on his right will continue, and so on around the circle.

Pantomime Speech. Have the students deliver their speeches

in pantomime only. They should pick subjects which require many gestures.

Nursery Rhyme or Bed-Time Story Stunt. Have the students recite the rhyme or tell the story in melodramatic fashion.

Famous Quotations. Have each student prepare a talk which ends in a famous quotation. You may want to select the lines yourself, or you may choose to let the student find his own. They may include the following: "Give me liberty, or give me death"; "Rich and rare were the gems she wore"; "Sink or swim, live or die, survive or perish."

Dead-Pan Stunt. Ask the student to select some subject upon which he feels deeply and to try to talk on that subject using vocal animation but without using facial expression or any other show of bodily animation. Then have him give the same talk again, using facial expression and gestures.

Comments

The teacher's comments should be designed to encourage. If a speaker comes to the front as a lamb being led to the slaughter and after a few sentences hesitates and falters and perhaps is not able to continue at all, encourage him to continue. Ask him questions that will enable him to continue. Praise him for what he has been able to do but do not flatter; *be sincere*. Suggest that the next time words will come easier. Do not permit the student to sit down defeated.

For the first two or three talks, there should be no deprecating remarks. The student's mistakes should not be mentioned. After the student has spoken sufficiently to have built self-confidence, then, and only then, should suggestions for improvement be made. The hurdles should be raised gradually but each time criticism should be tempered by praise.

Do not listen to a student who demands criticism "straight out from the shoulder." He probably doesn't mean what he says. Point out to him and to the class the method you are using. Mention that we profit by noting what is done well by ourselves and by other class members.

The following are suggestions for comments:

1. Be helpful, constructive, friendly, sincere.
2. Comment on each talk. Say more than that "that was a good talk," or, "well done." Be specific. Explain why it was good or what made it excel.
3. When you comment, stand in front of the class in such a

position that you can direct your attention, not only to the speaker, but to the entire class. The comments that are made with direct reference to the speaker should be applicable to all present.

4. Encourage students to keep notebooks in which they can jot down points that are made.

5. Drill, drill, drill, drill. Pick some point that you wish to stress. Perhaps you want him to show more animation. Tell him not to show so much self-control. Say to him, "I'll tell you what I want you to do. Let's try it and see if it works." Then take a line from his talk which needs force and ask him to repeat it as if he really meant what he said. Have him say it again and again. Don't drill just one student. Drill as many as time will allow. Make the drill brief and definite.

6. Ask the class to applaud every speaker as he stands to speak and when he finishes. This will encourage him and will produce a friendly atmosphere. While students are applauding at the conclusion of the talk, move to the front of the class.

7. Never permit a student to sit down discouraged. He may not do as well as some of the others; in fact, he may be the worst of the class, but don't let him think so. It may stretch your imagination and your ingenuity but find something good to praise. Maybe it will only be, "Congratulations. You had the courage to stand up and face the class. With a little more practice you will find how easy it is to stand before this group or any other group." But whatever you say, say it with sincerity.

8. Stress the positive. Always mention something good about the speaker. Temper the suggestions for improvement on the one hand with praise on the other. Soften the blow.

9. Do not criticize a student's grammar or word choice in front of the class. If you wish to see him after school to call attention to certain errors and suggest that he study grammatical rules, all right. But it has been found that calling attention to grammatical mistakes after a talk, or, what is far worse, stopping a talk in the middle and correcting them, makes the speaker so self-conscious that he will lose any poise he has already gained. Strange as it may seem to English teachers, and at the risk of being called a traitor to the profession, it might be pointed out that audiences are usually far more concerned with content and with the emotional impact of a speaker than they are with his knowledge of grammar, or lack of it. A speaker is judged by whether he makes contact with his audience; communication is not in direct ratio to grammatical purity.

10. Do not appoint student speech or grammar critics. It matters little if the comments are friendly, fair, and definite. I have seen teachers who would pick the brightest little girl as the critic. She would sit with pencil poised and notebook in hand and as soon as the poor culprit up front began to talk she would begin to scribble furiously. If the speaker were good, she was not so busy; but if he were poor, she was in the height of her glory. When poor Joe finished, she would stand and with delight talk longer than he did, pointing out with gestures just where he made each false move. Such a deplorable exhibition would leave Joe broken and unnerved and useless as a public performer until someone restored his confidence. The devastation this little critic wrought in two minutes could not be cleared away in two months.

11. What is worse than having one student critic is permitting class criticism. Here the class may sit with critic sheets or notebooks and thoroughly dissect, disintegrate, and decompose the speaker. Nothing is sacred—the shoulders, head, chest, hands, elbows, feet—all come in for observation. Movements, gestures, approach, retreat, voice, enunciation, pronunciation, sentence structure, and grammar—with its multitude of possibilities for error—all draw analysis and comment. Students tend to be far more devastating in their criticism than they would ever permit a teacher to be of them. Students can easily demoralize their associates. When Mr. Burns wrote that we should see ourselves as others see us, it is doubtful if he had in mind a student's exercise in speech class.

12. Let the whole class participate when you are reasonably certain that their response will help to build confidence in the speaker. Ask a variety of questions as the exercise progresses. "Was the speaker enthusiastic?" "Did he know his subject?" "Were you interested?" "Did his talk have a plan?" "Did the speaker have a sense of humor?" "Did he have good contact with his audience?"

13. Stress again, and again, and again the basics in speaking. Do not overemphasize the trivia. Ask and answer these questions in your mind, or raise them in the minds of the students: "Has the speaker earned the right to speak on his subject?" "Does he understand it?" "Is it a part of him?" "Is he interested in what he is saying?" "Does he have a sincere desire to communicate?" "Does the audience want him to continue?" If a student is earnestly trying to get a message over to his audience, automatic-

ly and unconsciously he will eliminate many speaking faults. He will talk with animation; he will look at the group; his elbows will not be frozen at his sides.

14. We shall probably have little time for class exercise in how the voice works—breathing, resonance, carrying power, range, and clarity. If we do want the class to become conscious of how the voice helps or hinders, how it even determines the meanings of words, how it reveals the attitude of the speaker, after the boy or girl has overcome his worry, we should work the comments on voice in with others. Again we stress the positive. We can formulate short drills for class participation. Speech books have many such drills. In the regular English class, we shall probably have insufficient time for sustained study and drill in voice improvement. If a student really needs basic help, we might suggest that he take speech. But we should remember that as a student gains confidence in his speaking ability, his voice will improve. And again, most audiences are more concerned with the emotional impact and stimulating content of the speech than they are with the voice of the speaker. By no means should we, as some English teachers do, teach a course in speech correction. We should put the voice in its proper place, as a means and not an end to good speaking.

15. Use "indirect instruction." Wait until some speaker does something well and then comment on it and point out to the class that they might profit by this example. Suggest to the class that they relate the student's strength to their own weakness. By way of illustration, if the speaker had a plan—if it had an arresting beginning, a clearly stated point, a memorable example, an impressive conclusion—call the attention of the class to this. Encourage the students to make the same careful preparation.

Suggested Points to Note in Commenting

- Adapted material to class
- Bodily animation
- Hearers were comfortable
- Easy to follow the thought
- Natural—not mechanical
- Direct and straightforward
- Subject not too vast
- Words pronounced distinctly
- Stood on both feet
- Effective pauses
- Smile
- Suitable to class
- Aroused interest with first sentence

Timely subject
Broad human appeal
Conversational contact with audience
Earnestness and sincerity
Gestures were natural
Enthusiasm for subject
Projected his voice effectively
Carefully planned conclusion
Speaker knew when to stop—and stopped
Sustained interest
Talk had plan
Knowledge of subject
Accomplished his purpose
Careful preparation
Class liked it
Avoided monotony
Variety of rate and pitch
Used effective analogy
Concrete examples
Memorable quotations
No common faults (“and-ah’s,” “uh’s”)
Clear, decisive expression
Spoke consonants correctly
Moved to front with confidence and enthusiasm
Excellent word choice
Talk appealed to the senses
Avoided vulgarisms
Has earned the right to speak on his subject
Desire to communicate
Eye contact

The Topics

Have you ever heard a student talk on “The Economic Situation in Czechoslovakia” or “The Early Explorers in the Mississippi Valley”? If you have, you probably know how deadly such a talk can be. The student probably knows nothing about the subject, except possibly what he was able to glean from an encyclopedia or a social studies text during a study period. He is not particularly interested in the subject. He does not care whether the rest of the class knows anything about it or not. He has fulfilled an assignment; that is all. In doing so, he has presented certain facts and thus he may have justified the teaching aim. But in all probability he has not engaged in a successful speaking experience. He has not built his self-confidence. There are too many doubts in his mind about the facts. The element of successful communication of ideas enters the picture only incidentally.

If, as some believe, a speech assignment should be incorporated

in an integrated program or a core curriculum, or grow out of a larger literature or composition unit, care should be taken that speech topics are not forced, are not remote and strained. The student must know his subject and be interested in it. What does it profit a student if after reading "A Sea Dirge" he be asked to talk on "My Reactions to the Sea," especially if he has been no nearer the sea than the Middle West? At best the material could be no closer than second hand, and it would be unusual if the subject were important to him. After reading "A Fringed Gentian" one teacher assigned the topic, "Do Flowers Have Ghosts?" What a speech subject that turned out to be! This is almost as impossible for a student to handle as "What the Daffodil Thinks."

To give a successful talk the speaker must first of all know his subject thoroughly. He must be familiar with all aspects of it. He must know twenty times more about it than he will ever be able to say. Then, he must be interested in it. Finally, he must have an intense desire to communicate his ideas to others. Without these three elements what he has to say will be as sounding brass and tinkling cymbal. For purposes of our exercise in English class, the subject must be one that can be encompassed in two minutes. If it is involved and technical, if proper treatment would take two hours, or two months, or two years, it will not serve our purpose and should be cast aside.

Material for speaking first of all comes from the student's own background, then from what he has found in conversation with others, and finally from books. But if the ideas come from books or magazines, they must be thoroughly digested and made a part of the speaker himself; otherwise they are likely to be as tasty as warmed-over fish. The process of making another's thoughts a part of yourself, or of making another's stories fit into your thought processes may take weeks or months. A student cannot be expected to live the ideas of another overnight.

Tell the student that you expect him to talk on a subject that he has lived, that is an integral part of himself, or one that he has really earned the right to discuss. He will soon discover that the only subject that he knows at all well is himself. He will find that he is more confident and at ease when he draws on his own interests and experiences for his material. Special occasions will make certain topics significant. For example, just before the Christmas season, appropriate subjects might be "A Christmas Thrill," "Christmas Shopping," "Gifts," "My New Year's Resolutions," "How to Decorate the House for Christmas."

One of the most widely sold and useful of *Illinois English*

Bulletins contained "A Thousand Topics for Composition," compiled by Marjorie E. Fox. Miss Fox wrote in her introduction:

If a student has something to say, he will be interested in saying it well so that he may transmit his ideas accurately and clearly to the reader. If he understands that the purpose of his writing is to convey experience and thought rather than to demonstrate sentence construction and the proper use of punctuation, his writing will have added interest and meaning. It is the teacher's first job to convince the student that he has something worth saying.

What Miss Fox believes about written expression is equally true concerning oral expression. Her list demonstrates to the student that he can talk about his resources in ideas and experiences; it is a motivating tool which may be used as an answer for the student who laments: "But nothing ever happens to me! What can I talk about?" The *Bulletin* containing "A Thousand Topics" may be secured by sending 25 cents to Harris Wilson, 109 English Building, University of Illinois. Below you may find some of the topics which you may use until you secure the complete list.

My First Fight	Champion!
My First Semester in High School	The Wrong Key
My First Job	Tinker, Tinker, Little Car
My First Dollar	Why I Dislike My Name
My First Formal Dance	If I Had But Three Days to See
My First Ten Years Were the Hardest	If I Were President
My Most Serious Accident	My Book (Play, Movie) of the Year
My Narrowest Escape	My Favorite Writer
How I Learned to Drive a Car	My Favorite Magazine
The Fun of Being Sick	My Hopes for Next Semester
The Dog in My Life	My Favorite Climate
I Sold Papers	My Alarm Clock
My Summer Job	Things I Could Get Along Without
A Tradition in Our Family	Three Books I Want to Own and Why
The Origin of My Family Name	Man's Greatest Invention
An Inexpensive Good Time	Why Read or Write?
An Experiment I Once Tried	If I Had a Million
I Was Scared	How Can I Find Time to Study?
That Was a Vacation!	Mice
A Sports Event I Will Never Forget	Midnight
A Hunting (Fishing) Trip	Life on the Farm
It Shouldn't Happen to a Dog	Life in the City
Blind Date	My Definition of Tolerance
Houses I Remember	What Is Humor?
A Day I Would Like to Forget	Qualities of Friendship
A Tense Moment	How I Classify People
Too Far from Home	Radio (TV) Advertising

How to Care for a Cat (any animal)	How to Cure Insomnia
How to Cure a Cold	How to Keep Friends
How to Take Good Snapshots	How to Buy a Used Car
How to Use Make-up	How to Read a Newspaper
How to Prepare for an Examination	How I Balance My Budget
How to Take Notes	How to Spend a Weekend
How to Get a Job	How to Get Along with a Brother (Sister)
How to Plan a Meal	How to be Nonchalant When Embarrassed
How to Criticize Music	What Is Sportsmanship?

Organization

As we have stated, in teaching speech in the English class we are primarily concerned with overcoming a student's fear of speaking and with building his self-confidence. The first two or three speech sessions, therefore, should not be exercises in logic and systematic organization. Permit the student to begin by talking about himself. Encourage him to talk about his interests. Topics may be "My First Date," "The Ideal Boy (Girl)," "My Most Embarrassing Moment," "School Spirit," "Winter Sports," "My Favorite Subject," "I Like to Study—But," "How I Classify People," "I Was a Soda Jerk (Waitress, Clerk)," and "Brothers—Bane or Blessing."

When a majority of the students have gained confidence, they may be led into a concentrated study of speech patterns and organization because they will then want to think logically and to develop ideas coherently. They will recognize that effective speaking is a blend of reason and emotion; that without emotional impact, the finest logic will avail little; that the "what" of the speech, however, is most important.

Even when we speak with a full mind, lack of organization may result in a heterogeneous conglomeration of material, incomprehensible and meaningless. One boy recently admitted, "I wish I could tell you what my talk is about, but I'm still trying to discover that." We can be certain that if the speaker does not know what he is trying to say, the audience will not take time to find out. We cannot expect the audience to do the speaker's work.

When students discuss the "what" of a speech, they will soon discover that speeches have differing purposes—to inform, to convince, to impress, to entertain, or to move to action. Since English class is not primarily a speech class, time will not permit a detailed discussion and practice of all the speech forms. We

shall, therefore, concentrate on a pattern of speech organization that may be used to accomplish any of the basic purposes.

It is imperative that students know the steps in organizing a speech. Now they should memorize the following:

1. Awakener
2. Point
3. Reason
4. Example
5. Conclusion

To succeed, they must recognize that when they want a group to think, to buy, to contribute, to write, to be impressed, or to be entertained, they will invariably use this pattern.

The following talk given Kay Pritchett in English class in Stephen Decatur High School illustrates the speech organization which we recommend.

HOW TO LOAF INTELLIGENTLY

Awakener: Are you bored with life? Do you go through the same dull routine day after day? If you will only stay awake for the next minute and fifty-five seconds, I shall tell you how you can put spice into your life and look forward to each day instead of dreading it.

Point and Reason: What you need is a break in your monotonous routine. You need variety in life which may be provided by learning to loaf intelligently. Not only will you be a happier person if you broaden your interests, but also you will become a more interesting person and people will enjoy your company.

Examples: To some people the idea of loafing intelligently may seem boring. But there are so many interesting ways to "loaf" that almost everyone can use at least one of these suggestions in occupying his spare time. I have found two good ways to loaf intelligently which are both rewarding and entertaining. You may want to try one of them.

For example, when you come home from a long exhausting day at school, don't plant yourself in front of the TV set to watch American Bandstand. Instead, as an intelligent loafer, go to your room and read. What you read is your choice. You may choose to read a good book, a magazine article, or even poetry. No matter what you read you will find, as I have, that this is an excellent way to relax and to escape into that other world which appeals to the imagination.

Another way to "kill time" profitably is to observe people. For instance, while waiting for a bus after school, watch people going about their business, going to or from work, going home after school, or just downtown shopping. By the way they act and talk and by the way they dress, try to guess what kind of people they are and what their personalities are like. You will never become bored doing this because there are all kinds of people in this world and no two people are alike.

Conclusion: So, if you often find yourself at the height of boredom with nothing to do, try one of these simple and relaxing ways to loaf intel-

lightly. You will soon be sighing, "It seems as if there just aren't enough hours in the day."

You have observed how naturally Kay's development of "How to Loaf Intelligently" fits into the suggested pattern of awaker, point, reason, example, and conclusion. In discussing speech organization, you will probably wish to discuss each division separately. The remainder of this paper will furnish ideas for class participation.

AWAKENER

The speaker's primary purpose is to reach other minds. He cannot do this until he has built a bridge between himself and his audience. He must begin to build immediately. When he stands, the class may be half asleep. Members may be thinking of their dates or they may be making plans for the coming weekend. One or two may be in love. With his first words, the opening must change the uninterested or passive audience into one whose minds are reaching out for what he has to say.

There are many kinds of awakers. Six effective ones follow.

By asking questions:

When baby sitting do you ever meet parents who give you more trouble than their children?

Did you ever stop to think that the President is not necessarily the cause of all our troubles?

By making a striking statement:

During the Christmas vacation, more college students check out books than at any other time of year.

Authorities predict that there will be a fifty percent increase in high school enrollment by 1965.

By using narration:

There comes a time in even the closest of sisterly loves when you desire to wring the sweet sister's neck.

Not long after arriving in Decatur my family acquired, in rapid succession, a police dog, a parrot, a monkey, and a beautiful little baby girl.

By arousing suspense:

First of all, I'd like to ask all of you not to repeat this because I might be killed if my mother found out what I am broadcasting.

Something was crawling up my sleeping bag. I could hear a sort of rasping sound against my tarp.

By beginning with a quotation:

"Women should remember they are merely ribs, not roosters. Men should rule the roost. The natural superiority . . ."

"After we leave school, the people we meet become our textbooks."

By telling a significant personal incident:

I liked my girl friend all right just as she was. But, like a lot of girls, Cheri thought she was slipping in her looks. She was pushing seventeen in years and a whole 120 pounds on the scale. Diets !

I used to spend hours chuckling over the contemporary cards in the book stores; now I shall never send one. Last summer when I was in the hospital, I discovered that these morbid cards lose all humor when one is ill.

POINT

The speaker must have a definite point, a principle, a purpose. This point determines the direction of the speech. He should first ask himself what he is trying to do. He must decide what he wants the audience to do. He will need to determine whether he wants to secure action, to convince, to impress, to inform, or to entertain. When he has decided, he should cut through stale rhetoric and state his point lucidly, concisely, and completely.

After arriving at his point, the speaker will plan an appropriate awakener. He will think of examples to prove his point or clarify it. To gain unity he will delete all extraneous material.

In the planning stage, the point will receive first consideration. In the delivery, it should follow the awakener. It is frequently difficult to convince a student that he should give his point early; sometimes he seems to be narrating a mystery. We must convince him that there is no valid reason for the speaker to keep his point a secret from his listeners.

Sometimes, before the youth speaks, the teacher might ask: "What are you going to talk about? Don't give me your speech. Just give me in one sentence what you want me to remember and take with me."

REASON

The reason explains why the point is what it is. The audience may not be impressed with a simple statement of the point; they may need convincing. In a two minute talk, one reason is usually sufficient; in fact the point may be so obvious that the reason for it is implied. In a longer talk, there will still be one main idea, but it will probably be supported with several reasons and any number of examples.

A few examples of points with supporting reasons follow.

Point: Concentration and clear thinking are important to a safe driver.

Reason: Such concentration may prevent accidents.

Point: Don't quarrel with your friends.

Reason: If you do, you may soon lose them.

Point: If you have the opportunity, visit the historic spots in and near Boston.

Reason: Early American history will have a deeper meaning.

EXAMPLE

The main task of the speaker, after designing a plan for his talk, is to amplify his point and reason. After he has gained the attention of his audience, he will need to hold it with examples and illustrations that are pertinent, definite, clear, and memorable. Russell Conwell demonstrates this secret in his famous lecture, "Acres of Diamonds." He shows how personal experience may be used to advantage. Students will need careful coaching to use statistics successfully or to display exhibits advantageously. If they are using analogy or referring to what they have read in their texts, in magazines, and in newspapers, they will need to digest thoroughly the materials in order that such evidence be a part of themselves. Students will do better if they narrate, illustrate, and describe from their own personal experiences. Then they will speak with enthusiasm, a prime quality in successful speaking, and there will be no temptation to deaden the effort through memorization.

One girl delighted the class with the subject of "Babysitting." Her point was that some parents can give teen-agers more trouble than their children. She illustrated it as follows:

I live in a neighborhood where children are plentiful and I often babysit. One father, when he leaves with his wife to attend PTA or a bridge club, will not leave until he has his little girl in tears. Like a lot of kids Suzie hates to see her folks leave; so her mother makes it a point to have her in bed when I arrive. What does her dad do? And I've never known it to fail. He goes to her room where Suzie lies peacefully in her crib, and in a big, loud voice yells, "Suzie, you go to sleep now and don't cry. Daddy and Mommie will be gone just a short time." Of course, Suzie immediately bursts into a flood of tears, and after her father leaves, I spend at least half an hour restoring peace and happiness.

A senior student discussed "The Christmas Tree Farm." *His point:* Money does grow on trees. *His example:*

Just before Christmas I took my two little sisters out to John Shyer's Christmas tree farm northeast of Decatur. There on this rough and rocky ground along the Sangamon River were thousands of evergreens from the smallest seedlings to those huge and beautifully proportioned. My sisters trotted ahead, dodging in and out among the trees. As we walked between the snow-covered branches trying to find one that suited the ever changing demands of both girls, Mr. Shyer explained how the venture that began as a conservation project had become a most profitable enterprise. He reported that last year he sold 3500 Christmas trees for an average price of five dollars.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion is as important as the awakener. Here the speaker has an opportunity to reinforce his point. He may do it by restatement, by an appropriate quotation, by a call to action (if the purpose is to secure action), or by a thought-stimulating question. Here are some concluding statements from student talks.

If you want to be an intelligent, well-rounded music critic, learn to listen carefully and objectively to all music.

Let's back our President, even if he is of a different party, class, or faith. Let's work with him!

My advice to you is to go to the library and check out a copy of *The Red Badge of Courage*.

Set up a daily schedule if you want to improve your grades.

Regardless of the concluding statement appropriate to a particular talk, the speaker should end with definiteness. He should sit down confidently, knowing that his purpose has been accomplished. His speech should not unwind like a ball of string dropped to the floor.

NCTE Achievement Awards

For the third year, the NCTE has honored some of the nation's outstanding students of high school English. Twenty-six winners and a like number of runners-up have been named in Illinois. Each winner has been awarded a scroll; each department of English represented has received a certificate of recognition.

As bases of decision, the judges received for each student a nomination blank, giving pertinent biographical data; three compositions written by the student, including an autobiographical sketch, an impromptu paper, and an out-of-class paper; results of a standardized test of literary awareness; and two supporting letters from a teacher and an administrator.

We extend our congratulations to the following students in Illinois:

WINNERS

Ancel, Fredric Davis, Proviso East, Maywood
Andes, Martha Natalie, South Shore, Chicago
Bartkowiak, Roberta Joan, Sacred Heart, Mokema
Birchall, Elizabeth Vance, Lake Forest, Lake Forest
Christensen, Cecile Anne, Proviso East, Maywood
Gummerson, Alan Frederick, Galesburg Sr., Galesburg
Hyde, Judith Louise, Crystal Lake, Crystal Lake
Dubach, Ellen Jane, Aquinas Dominican, Chicago

Jagla, Suzanne, Eisenhower, Decatur
Kaplan, Barbara Joan, Evanston Township, Evanston
Kirschke, Paul Evan, York Community, Elmhurst
Lancaster, Karen Sue, Stephen Decatur, Decatur
Larkin, John W., Jr., Mt. Carmel, Chicago
Leich, Susan Carol, Glenbrook, Northbrook
Levin, Harold D., Oak Park and River Forest, Oak Park
Lukes, Russell, Lindblom, Chicago
Manlove, Elizabeth, Jacksonville, Jacksonville
Mites, Carroll Ruth, Collinsville, Collinsville
Moberg, David Forrest, Galesburg, Galesburg
Newman, Charles Phillip, Oak Lawn Community, Oak Lawn
Pennell, Thomas Melvin, Marquette, Alton
Reid, Donna Marie, Thornton Township, Harvey
Rubin, Ruth Ellen, Roger Sullivan, Chicago
Schmidt, John Roggen, Evanston Township, Evanston
Silverman, Michael David, Evanston Township, Evanston
Williams, Kenneth Charles, Niles Township, Skokie

RUNNERS-UP

Abrams, Philip Samuel, Oak Park and River Forest, Oak Park
Allen, Daryl Sue, Oakland Community Unit, Oakland
Ashmore, Valeria Jean, Pearl City, Pearl City
Bonin, Sylvia Evelyn, Glenbrook, Northbrook
Bowman, Mary Virginia, Urbana, Urbana
Burchard, John Edward, Evanston Township, Evanston
Butler, Kathryn Louise, Alton Sr., Alton
Campbell, Melinda Beth, Kewanee, Kewanee
Christenson, Karin Ann, North Park College Academy, Chicago
Fox, Carol Jean, Palatine Township, Palatine
Giesel, Mary Ann, Grayslake Community, Grayslake
Glass, Louise Meriwether, Mt. Vernon Township, Mt. Vernon
Haiges, John Jacob, Proviso West, Hillside
Halfter, Joy Isolde, York Community, Elmhurst
Haskins, Karen Eileen, Proviso East, Maywood
Henderson, Donald Anthony, Mt. Carmel, Chicago
Hoyt, Linda Jean, Chillicothe Township, Chillicothe
Jones, Ralph Thomas, Pekin Community, Pekin
Kostka, Dale G., Maine Township, Park Ridge
Moses, Alice Anne, Cumberland, Greenup
Quackenbush, Craig Paul, Arlington, Arlington Heights
Russell, Judith Elizabeth, Highland Park, Highland Park
Schnaer, William Joseph, Evanston Township, Evanston
Straight, H. Stephen, Oak Park and River Forest, Oak Park
Topp, Anne Carol, Bishop Muldoon, Rockford
Young, Ellen Sleator, Alton Sr., Alton

Illinois Association of Teachers of English
Executive Council and Committee Meetings

Meetings: Chicago, Hotel Sherman, March 17 and 18, 1961

Program Committee: Friday evening, 7:30, in "The Time Room"

Advisory Committee: Friday evening, 7:30, "The Life Room"

Executive Council: Saturday morning, 8:15-11:30, "The Ruby Room"

Members of the Illinois Association of Teachers of English who attend the committee and Executive Council sessions are invited to attend the noon luncheon of the English Club of Greater Chicago, at Stouffers, Madison and Dearborn. Dr. Philip Jackson of the University of Chicago will speak on "Creativity in Adolescence."

The NCTE and the NDEA

The National Council of Teachers of English is seeking to have English included in the revision of the National Defense Education Act. Reasons are explained in a documented book, *The National Interest and the Teaching of English*, published in January, 1961, by NCTE. Copies are available at \$1.65 for NCTE members (\$1.95 for non-members). Address: NCTE, 508 South Sixth, Champaign.

In this session of Congress hearings concerning possible extensions of NDEA will be held. Write to your Congressman stating the need for federal support for improving the teaching of English.

